

The

# Catalyst



The Newsletter for Interpreters in California State Parks

Summer 1996

Volume 2 No. 1

## Field Notes

The bat population has returned to the **Folsom Powerhouse**. They live in the cracks between the ceiling of the first floor and the second floor of the building. They cause no problems in and of themselves; however, their profuse droppings fall right on the walkway through the Powerhouse where visitors walk. The bats had left during the winter season and as their departure had not been noticed in previous winters, it suggested they had perhaps left for a new site. However, they are now back and the staff is looking for suggestions on how to live with them. They have been told of guano trapping devices installed in other historic structures but still have not found a method suitable for the Powerhouse. The ceiling is very high and inaccessible. They have contacted national bat organizations, etc., but so far nothing quite fits the needs. The bats are quite a controversial subject among staff and volunteers. While some are oriented toward natural history protection as well as historic preservation, others are less sympathetic to wildlife. Anyway, if anyone has suggestions or stories on how they have dealt with this problem, Lynda Swenson would appreciate hearing from you.



A railroad gravity car reproduction is nearing completion at **Mt. Tamalpais SP**. August 1996 is the centennial celebration of "The Crookedest Railroad in the World."

Major filming is occurring this summer at **Patrick's Point SP, Humboldt Lagoons SP, Prairie Creek Redwoods SP and Del Norte Coast Redwoods SP**. Amblin Co., Edwards & Hunt and Spielberg will film a sequel to *Jurassic Park* called *Lost World* beginning in late August.

State Parks recently entered into an agreement with DWR to assist with funding for a James Beckwourth exhibit at the **Lake Oroville SRA** Visitor Center. This exhibit, which portrays the impact of the Black American on westward expansion, will be installed in January of 1997.

An audio tour of the Immigration Station on **Angel Island SP** was just completed by Antenna Theater. They are the company that did the tour of Alcatraz and they have won numerous awards. Audio stations are installed in four rooms of the Immigration Station Detention Barracks as well as wax figures in one room depicting a Chinese immigrant being interrogated by immigration officials.

More on page 3

## What's Inside...

Neat things that happened	Pages 6 - 11
Ideas you can use	Pages 11-14
Stuff to think about	Pages 15-21





*Catalyst is published quarterly by California State Parks. ©1996 Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of California State Parks. By submitting a manuscript the author warrants to Catalyst that it does not infringe on any copyrights and that the author assumes full responsibility for any such infringement. For address changes or additional subscriptions call Darlene Mitchener at (916)654-2249. Please contact the editor for permission to reprint any item appearing in Catalyst. ISSN 1089-9286*

**Catalyst Editor:** Brian Cahill

**Colorado Desert District**

200 Palm Canyon Drive  
Borrego Springs, CA 92004

(619)767-3716

FAX (619)767-3427

102445,2262@compuserve.com

## Contributors Guidelines

*Catalyst welcomes your original articles of any length! Or, send copies of stories published elsewhere that you think our readers will appreciate. Be sure to include information about the publication so we can get permission to use the material. You may submit an article at any time. Deadlines are October 15, January 15, April 15 and July 15 for November, February, May and August publications respectively,*

*We appreciate articles submitted on disk or by E Mail. We can read most formats of DOS/Windows disks. Printed manuscripts, facsimile or phone messages are also accepted.*

*Illustrations are strongly encouraged. Drawings, graphs or illustrations may be submitted on disk or hard copy. Black & white glossy photos are preferred, color prints or slides sometimes work. All photos and artwork submitted will be returned promptly.*

## Thanks!

### To everyone who contributed to this issue:

Alan Wilkinson	Bob Dunn
Kim Selleck	Carolyn Fatooh
John Mott	Joanie Cahill
Donna Pozzi	Kay Robinson
Steve Feazel	Tom Hunnicutt
Jack Shu	Glen Kaye
Luan Aubin	Rouvaishyana
Mary Helmich	Dave Brooks
Kim Baker	Shelly Quaid
Lisa Lay	Tom Lindberg
Steve Radosevich	Jonathan Williams



## The Catalyst Committee

Karen Beery	Guide II	San Simeon	(805)927-2049	FAX (805)927-2031
Philip Carey	Exhibit Coord.	Env. Design	(916) 653-9958	FAX (916)653-4458
Wes Chapin	DIS	Channel Coast	(805) 899-1406	FAX (805)899-1415
Diane McGrath	DIS	SLO Coast	(805)549-3449	FAX (805)541-4779
Julie Payne	SPI I	San Simeon	(805)927-2014	FAX (805)927-2031
Donna Pozzi	SPI III	Park Services	(916)653-4643	FAX (916)657-4747
Pauline Spear	MC III	Park Services	(916)653-4381	FAX (916)657-4747
Mary Stokes	DIS	Four Rivers	(209)826-1196	FAX (209)826-0284
John Werminski	SPI II	Park Services	(916)653-8959	FAX (916)657-4747

# More Field Notes

A mountain lion with cub has been active in the Negro Bar area at **Folsom Lake SRA**. The lion has been sighted several times by park visitors and recently sighted by a park ranger. Obviously, there are concerns about her presence in the park as it has a campground, picnic area, beach and some trails. So far, no negative interactions with humans have occurred.

**Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association** opened a "Nature Center" outlet in the town of Ferndale. Hopefully this will allow us to reach a different type of tourist/customer (perhaps B&B folks) and produce additional revenue for the association.

The annual "Gathering Days" was held recently at **Wassama Roundhouse SHP**, Native American Dancers from several tribes put on quite a show.

A new special event is in the works at **Fort Tejon SHP**. Commemorating the 142nd anniversary of the Fort, visitors will be immersed in the 1854 town on payday. Captain Gardiner and his wife will show folks around while the enlisted men spend the evening gambling and carrying on. It will include candlelight tours of the officers' quarters and maybe even the chance to overhear the laundresses gossiping.

The historic Dyar House at **Cuyamaca Rancho SP** is under extensive remodeling. It will greatly expand exhibit space along with a new information counter and sales area.

It has been a dry year in southern California. Forest fire threatened **Mount San Jacinto SP** and led to extensive evacuations of the park and the town of Idyllwild. The flames stopped just short of the park, but visitors have still not returned in their usual numbers.

The Bannister House is the newest addition to **California Citrus SHP**. The historic house was donated by the city of Riverside and relocated to the park. It represents a middle class grower's home of that period. The house will include a visitor center, sales area, caretaker's home and ranger office.

A new exhibit is in place at **Silverwood Lake SRA** to showcase the many features of the area. The display was funded by the Department of Water Resources as a recreation mitigation project.

The Friends of the **Folsom Powerhouse Cooperating Association** has contracted with a local architect firm to develop conceptual plans/drawings for a visitor center at the Folsom Powerhouse. The firm is experienced in historical reconstruction and design and has a wonderful "feel" for the special needs of the State Historic Park. The park and the association are really happy with their preliminary drawings and the whole project is exciting.

Thanks to funding from Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation and our local non-profit Associations there is now a telescope at the **Humboldt Lagoons SP** Visitor Center and new elk interpretive panels are also en route from the manufacturer.

**Benbow Lake SRA** staff turned the campfire center from fire ring and rotten benches into a very attractive, full scale (electric w/ A/V etc), and comfortable facility this spring. Most of the work was accomplished by the SPRI Gary McLaughlin.



Northern Buttes District recently held a Sesquicentennial Living History event at **Bidwell Mansion SHP**. This was a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Bear Flag Revolt. Many of the roles were played by district staff including Superintendent Dave Bartlett, Maintenance Chief Mike Coronado, Museum Tech Shirley Kendall and DIS Steve Feazel. It was great fun!



# What's Up?



## Interpreters' Resources

### NAAEE Annual Conference

The North American Association for Environmental Education is holding its 25th annual conference this year. Titled *Environmental Education for the Next Generation: Professional Development and Teacher Training*, it will be held in the bay area November 1-6 1996. For more information call Janet Thoreen (513)676-2514.

### Watchable Wildlife Conference

Come "catch the wave" at the fifth annual Watchable Wildlife Conference. It will be held in Huntington Beach on November 12 - 16. For information call (800)SAY-OCEAN or on the Internet at <http://www.gorp.com/wldlife/confrnce.htm>

### National Interpreters Workshop

Join us in Billings October 22-26 to share interpretation under the Big Sky. The annual workshop of the National Association for Interpretation will bring together a thousand interpreters - some of the best in our field. For more information call (970) 484-8283

### The Tree Trunk Activities Kit

A colorful, 30 page activity booklet about trees and forests written for kids and adults, and its free! From Georgia-Pacific, 133 Peachtree St., NE, Atlanta GA 30303. Phone (404) 652-4000

### Fire Ecology Resource Management Education Unit

Seven activities targeting grades 5 & 6 with a 15 page teacher background section. Developed in 1995 by a fire education task force. Contact Bill Clark, Fire Management Specialist NPS, at the National Interagency Fire Center, 3833 S. Development Ave, Boise ID 83705. Phone (208) 387-5224.

### Project WET Materials

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) has several publications available including a Curriculum & Activity Guide, the WETnet Newsletter and others. Call (406)994-5392

### Young Entomologists Society

Lots of resources on insects and spiders. On the web (where else?) at: <http://insects.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/yes/yes.html>  
or try:  
<http://www.tesser.com/minibeast>  
Not wired? Call Gary Dunn at (517)887-0499

### Grants From the Institute of Museum Services

For all types of museums with a budget of \$250,000 or less. Grants up to \$2500 for training and \$2500 to implement the training. Call IMS at (202) 606-8539

### Nature Notes Software

This program will allow you to document sightings and retrieve information on 12 categories of plants and animals. Sections are included for 700 mushrooms, 360 trees, 1300 wildflowers, 640 invertebrates, 2200 insects, 680 spiders, 900 fish, 500 amphibians 1400 reptiles, 9500 birds, 4600 mammals. IBM compatible, requires 40 MB plus more for data. From Rainbow Collection, 83 Rolling Hill Ln, Southington, CT 06849.

### They Came Singing:

#### Songs From California's History

These 61 songs provide a direct emotional link to California's colorful past. The book includes background notes and historical summaries along with guitar chords, games and dances. A CD with all the songs is also available. Book \$20, book with disc \$35. Calicanto Assoc. (510)339-2081.

### Good sources for Geologic Time Scales

The Geological Society of America (800) 824-7243 FAX (303) 447-1133 3300 Penrose Place, Boulder, CO 80301

The American Geological Institute (703) 379-2480 FAX (703)379-7563, 4220 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302-1507

Call or FAX them and they will send you a brochure of available publications and educational materials.



# Dear Master Interpreter

## Dear Master Interpreter:

I am trying hard to use the new official "signature" title "California State Parks" in my writing but I sometimes stumble over style and usage. Do I use the word "the" before it? Is it plural or singular? Can you offer any advice?

Syntactically Challenged



with the term STATE – it refers to both a geographic entity and a political one. When "California State Parks" (or just "State Parks") refers to a branch of government (the Department of Parks & Recreation), it should be *capitalized* and used as a *singular* proper noun. When it refers to a collection of park units (as in "many California state parks offer campfire programs"), it should be left *uncapitalized* and considered *plural*. In most cases it stands nicely on its own without the word "the."

MI

## Dear Challenged:

There is no official direction from headquarters to follow on this so I checked with a master wordsmith named John Werminski and he offered the following tips which may help until you get more official direction. The problem with CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS, is the same as the problem

## Dear Master Interpreter:

My Daddy always taught me to use the fan on a projector to cool the lamp after using it. They taught me that again when I studied basic interpretation at Asilomar. How come the owner's manual for my new projector doesn't mention this?

Cool Dude

## Dear Cool:

Projectors and lamps have changed a lot since your Daddy's time. Kodak has not recommended using the fan to cool a projector lamp after use for many, many years. But this is a popular myth that just refuses to die. In most situations it is better for the lamp to cool slowly, so just turn it off and let it rest. (Be sure your last slide is not still down in there getting cooked though.) Use the fan setting only when you are using a dissolve unit (or when your Daddy is watching).

MI

## Dear Master Interpreter:

You won't believe this one! A visitor to Glacier National Park lost his car keys while attempting to lure a ground squirrel by dangling the keys out in front of the critter. The squirrel grabbed the keys and ran down a hole with them. The keys were never retrieved, a ranger cited the man for harassment of wildlife, and a locksmith was called to make new car keys.

Amused

## Dear Amused:

You're wrong, I do believe it! When you've been in the field as long as I have you've seen everything.

MI



*Sally Scott, former editor of Catalyst, bid Aloha to State Parks. She did a terrific job creating The Catalyst and carrying it through the first couple of years. Sally worked quietly, patiently and with a great sense of humor to turn our modest newsletter into a very viable communication tool. We are extremely grateful to her and know that she will be missed. She received a certificate of appreciation signed by Director Murphy.*

Southern Division Workshop

# Interpreting Critical Resource Issues

by Joanie S. Cahill

SPIA Anza-Borrego

"Interpreting Critical Resource Issues" was the theme of this year's Regional Interpretive Workshop. Offered in cooperation with the National Association for Interpretation Region 8, participants left the course with the tools for using interpretation to gain the public's support on difficult issues. The goal of keynote speaker and facilitator John Veverka was to have everyone participate in a staff-friendly procedure for planning an effective interpretive strategy.

Held in the Idyllwild area at Camp Tahquitz Pines, the diverse group of 40 interpreters, managers, rangers, volunteer coordinators, archaeologists and resource ecologists learned to put their heads together with a focus and process provided by Veverka. The benefits of "group think" were evident as each team of five made an interpretive plan in sixty minutes or less. Some of the issues that were dealt with included: group camping that is damaging park resources; visitors feeding the animals; protecting the habitat of an endangered species and removing exotic species.

"Don't let the perception of what you're going to do stop you from doing it," was Veverka's advice. Many people are overwhelmed by the issue and fear that dealing with it will create an overwhelming workload. With this process and a team of co-workers, a useful plan can be developed in a short amount of time. In fact, once the public understands the issue and their role in it, your workload may decrease.



*A diverse group of 40 interpreters, managers, rangers, volunteer coordinators, archaeologists and resource ecologists learned to put their heads together with a process provided by John Veverka.*

During the two day, three night workshop, brief sessions were held on a variety of other critical resource topics. State Park Resource Ecologists Janet Didion and Mark Jorgensen presented "Feral Cats and Other Exotic Species" and "Wildlife Surveillance

spent two years as a park development officer in Botswana. If you think vandals are bad at your park, be thankful that you don't have elephants destroying your restrooms in search of water or scratching their backs on what used to be your park signs.

---

***If you think vandals are bad at your park, be thankful that you don't have elephants destroying your restrooms.***

---

After Dark" respectively. DPR Superintendent Jack Shu gave differing perspectives in his session, "Relating Critical Resource Issues to Diverse Cultures" while Analyst Ken McKowan spoke on "Using the Media For Your Message."

In an enjoyable evening session, Superintendent Susan Ross gave a slide presentation about critical resources in Africa where she recently

Many of the participants cited the interagency networking as a highlight of the workshop. Randy Solis, a ranger with Riverside City Parks and Recreation, found a funding source for one of his projects and also met someone he could help out with an eagle specimen. Chris Smith, a ranger at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, left the training with his batteries recharged. "It's refreshing to see all the enthusiasm for good interpretation," he remarked.

National Park Ranger Erik Oberg from Joshua Tree N.P. said, "The real selling point to me was the whole issue of critical resources," which relates directly to what he's doing at the park. He received good suggestions in the media session and found Veverka's planning process to be the key for his park to take a proactive strategy to deal with issues that are coming up. Karen Saffle, a volunteer with the U.S. Forest Service at Mill Creek, also appreciated the practical approach and felt that the training was a great help in writing interpretive plans.

Archaeologist Manfred Knaak, who is working on a general plan for State Parks, plans to use the process to determine recommendations on issues he is presenting in the plan. He found the workshop, "informative, useful and educational, to see how this process evolves from idea to solution."

This valuable regional workshop was organized by Luan Aubin and Brian Cahill, who are District Interpretive Specialists for DPR and members of NAI Region 8. Funding and organizational assistance were shared by DPR and the National Association for Interpretation.

The planning process learned in the training has ten steps, each with a question to be answered. It is best done in a group and only takes a short time. For those of you who missed the course, the outline is covered in Veverka's book, *Interpretive Master Planning*. For those who did attend, don't forget the 11th step, implementation. *Now that you have a great plan, how do you plan to make it happen?*

### A brief summary of the ten steps used in the Interpreting Critical Resource Issues training:

1. What is the critical issue?
2. Why is the issue critical?
3. Specifically, what needs to happen for the critical issue to become "un-critical"? (What results are you looking for?)
4. What is the message that needs to be conveyed - what specific objectives do you want your critical issue interpretive services to accomplish (learning, emotional, behavioral)?
5. Who is the most appropriate audience that the critical issue interpretive messages will be targeted to and why?
6. What is the opinion or perceptions of the visitors regarding the critical issue (are they aware of the issue, do they care about the issue, support correcting the problem etc.)?
7. How will the visitor BENEFIT by working with you to address the critical issue resolution?
8. What are the most appropriate techniques (interpretive programs, services, or media) you will use to: create awareness of the issue to the visitor; create an "opinion" about the issue within the visitor; and change attitudes, beliefs, or opinions in the visitor?
9. How long will your critical interpretation have to stay in place for real results?
10. How will you EVALUATE your interpretive efforts for the critical issue to see if the interpretive objectives are actually being accomplished?



The workshop was organized by Luan Aubin and Brian Cahill. Here they review the pre-training assignments with keynote speaker John Veverka.

*And the Theme is: The Theme!*

# Interpretive Communication

(The first in a series of three articles about the Northern Regional Interpretive Workshop.)

By Carolyn Fatooh  
Pine Ridge Association

Interpretive communication has a *theme*. This was the main point of Dr. Sam Ham's regional training workshop on **Practical Interpretive Methods**.

Dr. Ham, a professor at the University of Idaho in Resource Recreation and Tourism, laid out the four essential qualities of interpretation. They are:

1. Interpretation is *enjoyable*.
2. Interpretation is *relevant*.  
(that is, *meaningful & personal*)
3. Interpretation is *organized*.
4. Interpretation is *thematic*.

You'll notice that *theme* is listed last, but it is the most important. The first two qualities hold our interest in a presentation, and the last two make the material easier for us to grasp and remember.

What is a theme? There is a big difference between a theme and a topic. A topic is a general subject category, such as "Coe wildflowers" or "the Franciscan complex at Coe." A theme is what you want to stress and have the public remember about that topic. Examples of themes for the previous topics are:

"Wildflowers at Coe have different adaptations to grow in different plant communities."

"The Franciscan rocks that underlie Coe are an interesting mix with fascinating and varied origins."

As you look at the topics vs. the themes, you'll see that a theme is a complete sentence. If it can't be written as a complete sentence, it isn't a theme.

Why is a theme so important? As Dr. Ham says in his book *Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets*, First, with a theme in mind, you'll know almost immediately what kinds of information will be needed to get the theme across to the audience. The second advantage is that most audiences find thematic communication easier to comprehend and more interesting than communication that isn't unified by a clear theme. Dr. Ham described a study which demonstrates just how important a theme is in helping us remember and comprehend information. Subjects read five versions of a story. Version #1 had the theme at the beginning, version #2 in the middle, version #3 at the end. Version #4 had no theme stated at all. Version #5 not only had no theme, but the sentences were rearranged in a totally random order, making the story completely nonsensical.

The researchers then tested the subjects' memory of the story. As we might expect, the version with the theme at the beginning was easiest to remember, with versions #2 and #3 close behind. The most surprising

result was that *there was no difference in memory of the version with no theme, and the nonsensical jumbled version!* Neither was remembered. All the information a visitor may remember from a talk on wildflowers with no theme is, "Boy, there sure are a lot of flowers at Coe!"

How do we write a theme? Dr. Ham lays out a three step process in his book:

1. Select your general topic (for example, "our soil") and use it to complete the following sentence:

"Generally, my presentation (talk, exhibit, etc.) is about our soil."

2. State your topic in more specific terms and complete the following sentence:

"Specifically, I want to tell my audience about the importance of conserving our soil."

3. Now, express your theme by completing the following sentence:

"After hearing my presentation, I want my audience to understand that it's necessary to conserve our soil to increase our crops and to protect the quality of our water."

This thematic approach is not just for environmental interpretation. It will work for any communication. A theme will help organize and focus your presentation when leading walks, giving talks, planning signs for exhibits, writing brochures, designing interpretive trail signs, and more.

**Next issue: more on organization.**



### Clarifying the Relationship

# Volunteers & Cooperating Associations

By Kay Robinson  
Park Superintendent

This article was written for *The Pine Cone*, the newsletter of the Pine Ridge Association. It helps clarify the relationship between volunteers and associations.

This month I thought I would talk to you about what it means to be a volunteer. Did you know that over 848,961 hours of time were donated by volunteers to California State Parks in 1995? This represents over 442 person-years of labor given in service to the visiting public. Many California State Parks could not function as effectively and as efficiently as they do without that help.

Two of the most common tasks that are performed by volunteers are as Camp Hosts and as hosts at visitor centers. Other jobs may include patrol (hike, bicycle, motorcycle, horse, sailboard, vehicle, or ski), maintenance, interpretive hikes and campfire programs, resource management programs (prescribed burns, exotic species control), and housekeeping.

All volunteers work directly for the District Superintendent of the district in which they work. Additionally, some volunteers may be members of an established Cooperating Association within that district. The District Superintendent is responsible and accountable for all programs and activities in their district, including interpretation and volunteer management. As a State Park volunteer, you "work for the Bear." In order to be a volunteer for the State, you are not required to be a member of the



cooperating association. However, here at Henry W. Coe State Park, we have a unique working relationship with the Pine Ridge Association.

The role of the PRA (or any cooperating association) is to assist the Department's efforts to develop interpretive and educational facilities and programs through funding of activities. The PRA has allocated about \$9,000 each year for interpretive programs. Examples of this support are: the fundraising effort for the Visitor Center expansion; publication of the Coe map, shrubs book, and trails of Coe book; construction costs for the bulletin board, and financial support of the Mushroom Mardi Gras booth.

The hours you volunteer are to Coe Park. Your membership in the Pine Ridge Association is co-incidental to that "association" with the park. The added benefit to being both a volunteer **AND** being a member of the PRA is that you may participate in the

various awards programs (service hours recognition, Golden Bear award) offered by the PRA. The benefit to the park is that those who do choose to go through the training are extremely well prepared to give information and assistance to the public.

During the year of 1995, a total of 234 people donated their time directly to Coe Park. One hundred and twenty of those volunteers hold membership in the PRA and have participated in training. the remainder were mainly short-term volunteers for trail and springs maintenance.

I am extremely appreciative of all the work you do throughout the year, knowing as I do that most of you hold down other full-time (plus!) jobs. I believe we have one of the strongest and best associations within California State Parks and I boast of this when at gatherings with other park staff. Thank you, in advance, for that time you will be donating to Coe this year.

Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area

# Bald Eagle Program — A Soaring Success

by Team Silverwood

Clad in lifejackets, binoculars and cameras, hundreds of visitors watched this winter as bald eagles soared over Silverwood Lake. With only admission to the park and a free reservation, these lucky people were able to cruise the lake during the ranger-guided tours. To publicize the tours, we sent out a press release to more than 40 newspapers, radio and TV stations. This effort was immensely successful. Soon reporters were calling and joining our tours. The local papers began running weekly photos and snippets of bald eagle tour information. The tours, from January through March, became so popular that several more tours were added mid-season.

Silverwood Lake, at an elevation of 3350 feet, is located in the transition zone between the San Bernardino Mountains and the Mojave Desert. The bald eagles migrate from the northwest to the warmer climate of Southern California. It is estimated that up to 40 bald eagles spend the winter tucked among the San Bernardino Mountains. Silverwood Lake was home to a nesting pair of eagles in 1993, the first time a pair of bald eagles had nested in Southern California in more than 50 years. Unfortunately, the three eggs never hatched. The nest still exists however, and it is hoped that the eagles will make another attempt.

Along with the tours, bald eagle counts were conducted each month from December through March. Volunteers assigned to specific areas



of the park helped to count the eagles at the lake in a one hour period. This count was done in conjunction with bald eagle counts simultaneously done by the USFS at the surrounding mountain lakes. Up to seven eagles, both adults and immatures, were counted at Silverwood at one time. Biologists observing the eagles at other times have seen as many as eleven at once.

To showcase the majestic bird, and educate the people of California of the importance of State Parks in providing habitat for animals such as eagles, Silverwood Lake staff began providing tours for the public and school children in 1988. To enjoy this park experience, visitors need only a reservation. The tours were held Saturday and Sunday mornings, a time when both eagles and visitors seem the most active. Up to 30 visitors at a time donned life vests, signed waivers, borrowed binoculars, boarded the barge and took to the water. We spent up to 1 1/2 hours viewing the eagles and talking about the natural and cultural history of the lake. On Tuesdays

and Thursdays we invited school groups to attend. Many times bald eagle tours would coincide with a lesson the children had studied. Besides bald eagles, visitors also saw great blue herons, red-tailed hawks, western, eared and homed grebes, cormorants, coots, scaups, deer & coyotes.

Some of the more successful interpretive techniques we utilized for our tours included the following:

- \* To describe the weight of an eagle we put 14 pounds of flour in a canvas bag and passed it among visitors and asked them to guess the weight.

- \* To show the length and wingspan of the bald eagles, we used a 3' and 6' piece of rope and had visitors hold each end.

- \* We laminated photos from a bald eagle calendar to hold up during our talk.

We found that it was more effective to give the bulk of our interpretive message while on shore prior to the beginning of the barge tour. Once on the water, visitors are more interested in viewing the birds than listening to rangers. At the end of our tours we handed out "I saw a bald eagle" buttons and Kid's Discovery Books.

More importantly, we hope the 800 people who went on our tours took with them a new understanding of the bald eagle. Hopefully they will understand the critical role California State Parks have in protecting and providing habitats for this bird and other resources. We look forward to next year and the return of the eagles.

Big Basin Redwoods State Park

## Sempervirens Room Dedication

By Steve Radosevich  
DIS Santa Cruz

Knotty pine cabinetry, Monterey style furniture, southwest pattern textiles, and exhibit panels with black and white photos - what sounds like a 1930s visitor center is actually a 1996 project that was completed and dedicated on June 28 at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Over the past two years the Sempervirens Room in Big Basin's Headquarters Building has been morphing from an uncomfortable and underutilized cavern to a warm and woodsy, stylish and informative visitor center.

An \$81,000 grant that Sempervirens Fund received from the Jeangerard Foundation has been used inside and outside this 1930s building to make it more suitable as a visitor center. Because of the cooperative and talented efforts of numerous unit and district maintenance and visitor services staff in completing major parts of the project, we got maximum bang for the bucks. The building received a

new wood shingle roof, central heating system, and lighting upgrade. Outside a new redwood round and shelter and a visitor information panel were completed.

Inside, along with the nostalgic rustic woodsy ambiance, a state of the art touch screen computer program allows visitors to view scenes and hear descriptions of several different hiking trails and other useful information about the park. Exhibits interpret historic recreational use of the park; portray the 1930s role of the Civilian Conservation Corps in park development; describe early redwood preservation efforts at Big Basin; and stress the importance of continued efforts to protect the park's entire watershed.

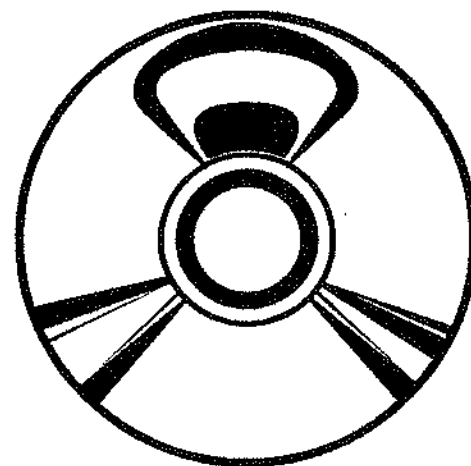
It's time to revisit Big Basin Redwoods (California's oldest) State Park to enjoy the majesty of the resource and to experience the new / old Sempervirens Room. Also be sure to visit the Nature Lodge, where new natural history exhibits were installed about six years ago.

## What is DVD?

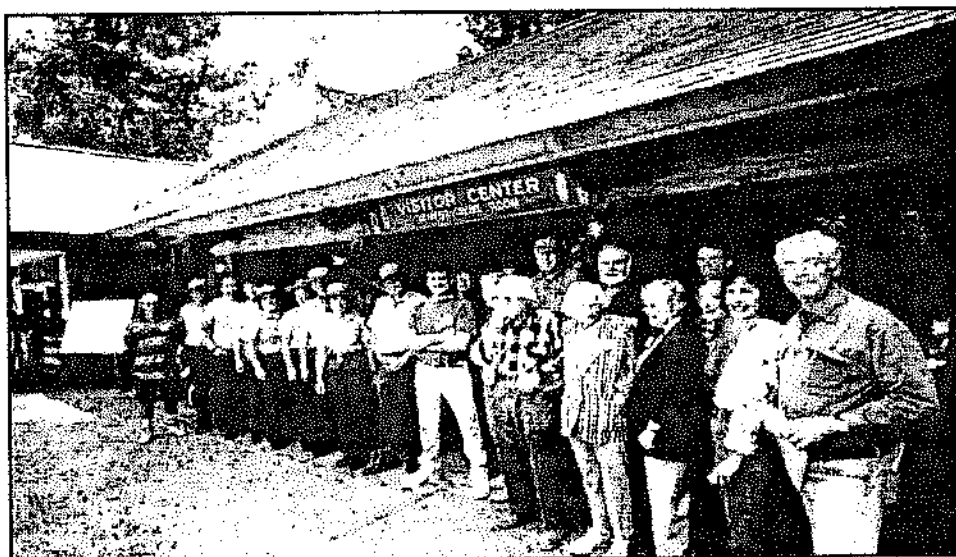
By Bob Dunn  
A-V Specialist RA

Digital video disc is a new audiovisual format — a 5-inch optical recordable disc that looks like a compact disc. I think that in the near future it will replace laser video disc and someday videotape. The playback-only hardware will be available in October, but the big news is that the high-quality record & playback hardware will be out in January 1997.

At the trade show I attended, everyone was given a DVD disc at the door and was invited to play it on different manufacturer's hardware. I rated Pioneer first with Sony or Phillips second. Digital optical technology will create new possibilities for us to present interpretive programs and information to the park visitor. Please call me at (916) 322-9384 if you're interested in using this new technology.



*Digital optical technology will create new possibilities for us to present interpretive programs and information to the park visitor.*





A Program You Can Use

# Jr. Rangers: Amazing Plant Adaptations

by Joanie S. Cahill

Park Interpreter Assistant P.I.  
Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

Looking for another Jr. Ranger program? This one is easy to do, and has been very successful each time I've presented it. While my outline is designed for the desert, it would "adapt" easily to your environment as well. The scavenger hunt sheets I use are purposely vague and subjective, because my goal is to get the children to really concentrate on the plants rather than on finding the right answer for a worksheet. Once they've done the scavenger hunt, I lead a nature walk with them to explore their observations in depth.

**Theme:** Plants have special adaptations for survival in the desert.

**Kids will gain:**

1. An awareness of the different types of plants that live in the desert.
2. An appreciation for the difficult conditions facing desert plants.
3. The ability to identify 3 common desert plants by name.
4. The ability to explain why desert plants are valuable to animals and humans.

**Time:** 50 minutes**Location:** Outdoors**Supplies:**

Booklets and Awards  
Plant Scavenger Sheets  
Clipboards  
Pencils  
Pictures of desert plants in bloom  
Ruler to show rainfall this year



kids they may go anywhere in the area as long as they can see you at all times. Tell them you will blow a whistle (or something) when their time is up.

Wander around helping out. Wait until most kids have finished, then blow whistle.

*Plant Walk**15 min*

Go through the area with group. At each special plant stop, ask kids to tell if they checked this plant off on their lists, and why they checked it. Discuss with kids what each plant's adaptations are and the reasons each plant is special. Conclude by asking the kids why these plants are important and helping them understand the reasons.

Desert Adaptations might include:

Small Leaves  
Light in Color  
Oily or Waxy Coatings  
Spines to shade & Protect  
Shallow, Wide-spreading Roots  
Super Deep Roots  
Seeds that are Hardy  
Grow slowly, Conserve Energy  
Intense Competition  
Have "Dormant" Period

**Conclusion****10 min**

Sit in a circle. Ask kids if they can remember a plant's name and its adaptations for survival. Review a few this way with the group and remind them of program theme. Hand out booklets and stamp. Say the Jr. Ranger pledge. If extra time, have them draw their favorite plant in the booklet.

**Introduction****10 min**

- Welcome kids, explain length of program and where parents will retrieve them
- Introduce self
- Have each child tell name, grade, and where from
- Explain Jr. Ranger program, awards
- Introduce today's theme: "Plants have special adaptations for survival in the desert." Ask kids what they did to prepare for their trip to the desert. Ask what special ways they think plants adapt to survive.

**Main Part of Program***Plant Scavenger Hunt* *15 min*

Have kids work in alone or in partners or threes. Give each a scavenger hunt worksheet on a clipboard. Go outside to a pre-selected area and tell

## Sample Scavenger Hunt Sheets

### Plant Scavenger Hunt

*Please do NOT pick or harm the plants. Just look, touch carefully, and smell...*

#### Find a plant:

- \_\_\_ that has oily leaves.
- \_\_\_ that smells good.
- \_\_\_ that is really stinky.
- \_\_\_ that has been nibbled on.
- \_\_\_ that has a fuzzy white seed ball.
- \_\_\_ that has green branches.
- \_\_\_ that looks like a beaver's tail.
- \_\_\_ that has BIG spines.
- \_\_\_ that you like best.

### Plant Scavenger Hunt

*Please do NOT pick or harm the plants. Just look, touch carefully, and smell...*

#### Find a plant:

- \_\_\_ that is smoky grey.
- \_\_\_ that has sharp spines.
- \_\_\_ that has tiny spines.
- \_\_\_ that has oily leaves.
- \_\_\_ that has green branches.
- \_\_\_ that smells good.
- \_\_\_ that has big seed pods.
- \_\_\_ that is light in color.
- \_\_\_ that you like best.

*Miniature Theater:***Build Your Own Paper Film Machine**

by Thomas Hunnicutt  
NAI, Arcata, CA

**Introduction**

Paper film is an inexpensive media device that requires no electricity. It can be constructed from found materials (cardboard and tape), and is completely portable. It is a hand operated (puppets welcomed), voice narrated (special effects encouraged), miniature theater (put it in your day pack) used to tell a story, via a series of illustrations presented on a roll of paper. Illustrations can be drawn, traced, cut and pasted out of magazines, or created by your audience (Yes!).

Paper film presentations usually consist of 10-40 images arranged sequentially on a roll of paper. Shows may run as short or as long as needed, the only limitation being the length of the paper. Images may be shown in rapid succession for a "virtual-cartoon" effect or shown as discreet still shots. Shows might involve a single narrator, or multiple players engaged in conversation.

The concept of paper film most likely originated from English Toy Theater. Toy theater enjoyed widespread popularity in England beginning at the turn of the century and continued until the post WWII era. Children could purchase miniature reproductions of famous theater homes of the day, complete with the characters, costumes and props to stage the best of English theater at home. Most miniature theaters were doll house sized and designed to be portable, the figures of actors and actresses usually being about four to five inches tall.

Orson Welles is only one of the many famous directors who "cut their teeth" in drama by staging plays as a child on miniature toy theater sets. Some miniature theaters featured a paper scroll to accommodate changes in background scenery. It was a small step for the scroll to eventually become foreground, as a story telling device with merits of its own. R. G. Davis, a founding member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, is credited with developing the medium into its present format.

**Paper Film Machine Construction**

Paper film machines can be constructed to accommodate almost any paper size desired. Adding machine paper (2 1/2 inches wide) is generally the smallest practical size paper used and is readily available from any business supply store at a modest price. The machine that I most recently constructed uses butcher paper that is 18 inches wide. The concept is simple; you need two rotating spindles generally mounted vertically on a frame, at a distance that accommodates the width of the viewing area you desire. Horizontal rectangular viewing areas are generally the most pleasing to the eye, so for 2 1/2 inch wide paper you might have an image area of about four inches. Just like a film projector, one spindle stores the scroll and the second spindle acts as a take up reel.

Paper film machines can be easily constructed with found materials. Sturdy cardboard, paper adhesive tape, glue, a sharp utility knife and a little imagination

are all that are required to make one. Cardboard tubes from rolls of paper towels make excellent spindles. To make the power unit cut out cardboard disks about two to three inches in diameter, punch a few finger holes around the circumference of the disk and mount it on the cardboard tube that serves as a spindle. Frames can be as elaborate or as simple as you like, but it is generally desirable to make them in a such a way as to conceal the spindles from view and create a defined image area to focus the viewer's attention. A shoe box or any other cardboard container makes an excellent ready made frame. With a few alterations and some imaginative decorations, shoe box cinema can be yours. For those with some carpentry skills the possibilities are endless.

Paper film can be used to fulfill a variety of interpretive and educational needs in the classroom or the field. It is perfect for any situation where clear discreet images will add clarity to your presentations, but where slide presentations or video may seem too formal or impractical (on the trail). I've used paper film to illustrate fly tying techniques, to diagram the water cycle, to illustrate stories, to provide images for cultural history presentations, and to illustrate identifying characteristics of plants. My own favorite activity is to allow children to illustrate and present an account of their experiences on a nature hike or tide pool walk. It gives them a chance to be creative (artistically and verbally) and provides me with an opportunity to evaluate their perceptions of the walk in a fun and unobtrusive manner, while giving everyone a chance to share "their story."



*Giving Meaning to our Message*

# Education, Interpretation or Propaganda

By Dave Brooks

Manager, Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary

While attending this year's Illinois Parks & Recreation annual conference, I sat in on a session which outlined the distinctions between Education, Interpretation and Propaganda. Presented by a panel consisting of Steve Aultz, Dale Goodner, Cindy Bakkom-Schletz, and Brook McDonald, the session was designed for a general audience of park and recreation professionals including communications and public relations people as well as interpreters.

As I sat there listening, taking notes and laughing at all the good-natured abuse being directed at the panel's propaganda expert — I couldn't help but think that the topic definitely deserved a wider audience. In fact, anybody involved in the delivery of information to the public should be required to learn the difference between education, interpretation, and propaganda (or advocacy, to use Brook's preferred term). This would include not only interpreters, but teachers (educators?), Journalists, TV reporters, advertising consultants, government representatives, political "spin doctors", etc.

The presentation's basic message was that one form of communication is not necessarily better than the others — it depends on your goals, your audience, and your message. In other words, it doesn't matter whether



or not you consider yourself an educator, an advocate, or an interpreter. It is important to know the difference, however, and to know when advocacy is inappropriate.

Education was defined as the communication of factual information. These facts are presented as value-neutral. Education may encourage students to develop informed opinions, but not necessarily to buy into ours or anyone else's opinions. Education is a process, because a true understanding of natural events and places, historical events and changes, or any controversial issues require a fairly in-depth examination. This is rarely possible in most interpretive programs.

Advocacy (propaganda is such an ugly word - isn't it?) is a much easier route to take when time is of the essence and our clearly stated goal is to get people to change the way they think. The worst kind of advocacy consists of intentional misinformation mingled with just enough fact to give it credibility. This is the stuff which gives propaganda a bad name. Much of the advocacy practiced by interpreters consists of personal opinions, agency policy statements, or carefully selected hard-hitting facts which we feel will inspire a change in attitudes or action in visitors. Sometimes this is necessary, such as those occasions when we

are trying to get visitors to alter destructive behavior. At other times it is not, and we do our visitors a disservice by not giving them more of the story. It should go without saying that we must all be particularly cautious about passing along misinformation. However, we have all seen it happen and have probably done it ourselves on occasion (unknowingly, of course!)

Most interpretation does and should fall somewhere between advocacy and education, i.e. a presentation of factual information which is as balanced and in-depth as our audience and time allow, but in a way which is both thought-provoking and entertaining.

Provocation and entertainment very often, by nature, present a somewhat tinted view of things. Furthermore, people rarely come to our sites to be educated - they want to have fun. As Dale Goodner stated, "Interpretation which does not advocate is wimpy."

Besides the obvious problems with the presentation of falsehood as fact simply because it gets our point across, we should always be cautious of the desire to "take the express route from awareness to action", as Dale warned. We should take every opportunity to present factual information objectively and in-depth when the nature of a program allows it. That way, when the "hard-hitting message moment" comes, our audience will see us as more credible, and our message will have much more meaning.

*Readers are opportunists*

# Where are the Writers?

By Glen Kaye  
NPS Interpretive Specialist

The *Western Historical Quarterly* is one of many publications I skim, browsing and grazing as I do, always looking for sustenance that can help me in my work. But I have become ruthless, for time is precious; if I am not quickly drawn to the thinking, I summarily dismiss it and take my foraging elsewhere. If the writing is viscous as lava, it is too much work. If it is insipid, it fails to nourish. If it is verbose, I am distracted by the urge to prune it. Readers are opportunists, just as omnivores are. Energy has to be efficiently used, or it is wasted.

Thus my delight in the enchanting beginning to Susan Rhoades Neel's essay, "A Place of Extremes: Nature, History, and the American West." Before I realized it, the images carried me to another place. I was engrossed as I experienced it, and it was good. I sensed that Neel knew this location well, and I developed trust in what she had to say. Her essay began as follows:

"Not far from the tiny gas-and-go town of Dinosaur, Colorado, a ragged dirt road drops off a high plateau and heads down toward the confluence of the Green and Yampa rivers. Deep in a desert canyon, the road ends at a place called Echo Park. Here the Green River loops back on its course carving a long narrow peninsula from a red sandstone massif. A sheer rock wall, awash with great streaks of desert varnish, rises from the water's edge. The river is not wide - a good arm could send a stone across - nor is it

boisterous, as rivers so often are in this canyon country. Like a ribbon of molten glass the water glides by noiselessly, carrying along the odd bit of cottonwood duff on its glistening surface. There is a profound stillness here, as though the earth had drawn a deep breath and held it. Nature's ordinary chatterings - the persistent flutter of wind-blown leaves, the dash of a rabbit helter-skelter through the scrub - are rendered inconsequential

---

***"I have not asked, 'What does the public want?' I have only asked, 'What do I want to say?'" — John Burroughs***

---

by the immense, silent stone. Not even the murmuring of children at play on the river's bank breaks the spell of quietude."

What a remarkable piece of writing for a professional journal. No footnotes in that first paragraph; no long, entangling sentences; no equivocation or pontification; no passive constructions that snuff the life out of ideas. I was ensnared by a delightful, believable sense of place, and artfully persuaded to explore the essay to its end. I made a mental note to seek out Neel's other writings, for if they were comparable, I would have much more satisfying and worthwhile reading.

And how rare such writing is.

It is rare, in part, because so few of us have learned the principles of good writing. Few have learned the power of simplicity. Few have learned to clarify what they think. "I write to learn what I think," declared one essayist. And how true this is. We

often don't know what we think about a subject until we put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard), and then discover, to our horror, how ill-formed our ideas are. We struggle along, wedging catechisms and adages into our work, and try to make the pieces presentable, as George Orwell would say, by sheer humbug.

It is rare, too, because of the extraordinarily serious way we often

express ourselves. "Professional solemnity" one observer calls it, the writing that is humorless and grim and intense, the litanies of unhappy views that are psychologically negative and unfulfilling. No hope. No hope. No wonder readers turn away. They seek promise and solutions.

René Dubois was successful as a writer in part because of the optimism he retained. "To rediscover our innate celebration of life," he declared in the last written work of his life, "the first obstacle to be overcome is the widespread belief that things are now going from bad to worse and that little can be done to reverse the trend ... much contemporary gloom comes not from actual tragic situations but from the prospect of social and technological difficulties that have not yet occurred and may never materialize ... I believe, as do many others, that industrial civilization will eventually collapse if we do not change our ways - but what a big if this is ... Life starts anew, for all of us, with each sunrise."

*Tell the Mission, Explore the Land, Learn the Facts*

## NPS Weaves New Web Design

Rare also is the writer who has something original to say - and the courage to say it. How easy it is to take the conclusions of others and pass them off as the end-product of human thinking, as if there was no more to be said. Most of us are also eager to please - to please our bosses, to please the reader, to please the publisher, to please the people important to us. And so we write what we think will ingratiate us with them. The results, inevitably, are predictable, without originality, and uninspired. "Orthodoxy means not thinking," penned George Orwell, "not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness." Rare is the writer who can elicit new relationships of nature and humanity and offer new ways of living.

"I have escaped trying to write for the public or editors," wrote the naturalist John Burroughs, "I have written for myself. I have not asked, 'What does the public want?' I have only asked, 'What do I want to say?'" When we discover emancipated writers, we reach for their ideas as a drowning person reaches for a life ring. We instinctively know there is more to life and society, and these people offer new views that could guide our way.

Their effect is great. Their courage to say what they think, their ability to delineate new relationships, and their ability to write with optimism and simplicity profoundly extends their impact. Such writing is for these writers as the atlatl is for hunters who have learned to use it well, and these are the writers our profession desperately needs.

If The Web is still something you're thinking about sweeping off the back bedroom ceiling, you'd better plan some serious catching up.

Recently NPS Director Roger Kennedy unveiled ParkNet, the new world Wide Web on-line magazine. ParkNet, said Kennedy, is designed to provide travel and tourism information on specific parks and to encourage electronic visitors to explore our mission, history, and the opportunities before us all.

ParkNet was also featured as the Web Site of the Week by The Microsoft Network, a major commercial online access provider. That -- plus the new design -- gave a huge boost to NPS visibility among the 20 million on-line users in 50 countries. At last count (and there really is a computer counter, just like those hoses near the entrance station) well over 400,000 "visits" are being made each week.

ParkNet is produced and organized around four main departments with rotating feature articles:

**Links to the Past** offers information about American's cultural heritage. Visitors will be able to learn how to retrieve information on preservation programs, grants and tax credits or learn about the National Register of Historic Places.

**Parksmart** offers educators the opportunity to retrieve developed lesson plans from a large inventory on a variety of NPS program themes.

Students for individual study learn about NPS programs by reading feature articles like Dive With a Ranger. Students will be able to play Park Wit, a game that teaches about NPS history and events.

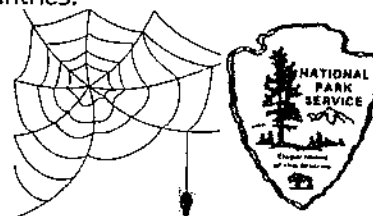
**Infozone** serves as a clearing-house for NPS information.

Here visitors can visit individual park Web pages, read NPS press releases, learn about employment, volunteering, public/private partnership opportunities and view park planning documents.

**Naturenet** offers information about natural resource planning and preservation. Links to Air and Water Quality, Plant Life, and Species Inventorying and Monitoring assist citizens and educators alike in understanding how the NPS protects the parks.

ParkNet was designed with the assistance of the Interactive Bureau, a design firm which created the Discovery Online and USA Today web pages.

ParkNet is found at <http://www.nps.gov> and is available to individuals who have a computer, access to Internet and WWW browser software. Internet, the means to access the WWW, connects more than 20 million users in more than 50 countries.





*An Opinion from California's North Coast***Reflections on the Storms of 1995**

**By Rouvaishyana**  
**Educational Outreach Worker**

The storm of December 1995 has given many of us pause about the vulnerability of our lives here on the coast. We remember the storms of January and March as being just as destructive. There have probably been big storms here since prehistoric times, but three in one year seems like a lot. This last one seems to have brought winds more powerful than any I can remember in my 14 years in this area, and I have spoken with a few other people who have lived here even longer who express the same thing. Here are some of my thoughts on the storms. I'll back it up with facts when it seems appropriate, but this is primarily an opinion piece, one that raises a few questions to think about.

It appears that the climate of Earth is getting warmer. The facts on this are not all in, and there is some disagreement among scientists about the cause for it, but there is no doubt that average temperatures worldwide have been on the rise since the 1980s. The question is whether humans are causing this change through our industrial manipulations of the atmosphere, or whether we are in a naturally-occurring warming trend. Whatever the cause, though, as the global heat balance shifts, we can expect to see changes in weather patterns, including bigger and more destructive storms in certain areas.

Question: Could this pattern of increasingly frequent and destructive

storms on the coast result in our home becoming gradually less habitable? Regional weather changes may have contributed to the abandonment of dwellings in the past. I would like to point out two parallels from Native American history, which may have lessons for us today and for the future.

---

***Could this pattern of increasingly frequent and destructive storms on the coast result in our home becoming gradually less habitable?***

---

Parallel 1: The Anasazi (the original Navajo word is Naasazi), builders of the abandoned cliff dwellings of the Southwest. These mysterious peoples, ancestors of the modern Pueblo nations, flourished for about 700-800 years before AD 1200. After this, many of their magnificent dwellings were abandoned, and the people seem to have disappeared without any written records or other traces. Analysis of growth rings in trees indicates that a lengthy drought began in their area just prior to the year 1200. This would have had an immediate and marked effect on crop production, and could have contributed to a rather rapid decision to seek new lands. Is a comparable cycle in the making here on the coast? After all, our technology requires us to consider the economics of regular repair from storm damage. The next few years could be very pivotal.

Parallel 2: The Coast Yuki, native inhabitants of the coast from the MacKerricher Park area to the Sinkyone Wilderness north of us. According to ethnographic accounts, the Yuki spent several months a year on the immediate coast making use of abundant food supplies and other materials. Yet their traditional houses here were somewhat temporary, built for the weather from spring through early to mid-autumn. As the rains and storms began, the people moved to sturdier houses inland, sometimes east of the ridge crests. Ironically, these areas often have heavier rains, but are shielded from the direct blast of storm winds. Thus, these people survived the devastating effects of winter storms through a pattern of seasonal migration.

Modern society is strongly rooted in permanent structures. At some point in the future, will we have to consider some form of modified migration pattern, or even be forced to abandon the area altogether? Or, alternatively, will we need to reinforce our buildings to make them more massive and undertake the expense of installing our power and utility cables underground? The first option would require a fundamental, though probably gradual, change in our lifestyles. The second would require great cost to utility companies, and ultimately to all of us. Neither one will be an easy choice. But whether we will need to make them at all will depend on the severity and regularity of storms in the coming years. Meanwhile, we can all prepare ourselves as best we can, just as we prepare for earthquakes and other natural disasters today.

# CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS. **150 EXCHANGE.**

The **CHRONOLOGY OF CALIFORNIA'S TRANSITION:** HIGHLIGHTING CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS AND EVENTS LEADING TO THE GOLD DISCOVERY AND STATEHOOD, compiled by the Interpretation Section, Park Services Division, California State Parks, is now in print!

Look to this unique resource for a nearly DAY-BY-DAY LISTING OF EVENTS that influenced the course of California history between 1845 and 1850. Teachers have found this a particularly welcome REFERENCE, as have Tour Planners, Reenactment Organizers, and History Buffs of All Ages. It is available for \$7.50 plus tax and shipping from the California State Parks Store, 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 653-4000.

Attention Cooperating Associations and Concessionaires! Consider stocking the **CHRONOLOGY** in your stores!

## **A SPLENDID LOOK AT AMERICA IN 1846!**

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Smithsonian Institution, the National Portrait Gallery has organized A TRAVELING EXHIBITION FROM THE NATION'S ATTIC. Representative objects interpret the textures of Life, Art and Literature, Science and Technology, and Politics of 1846—the year of the Smithsonian's creation!

Accompanying this wondrous display is a book-length Exhibition Catalog entitled, 1846: PORTRAIT OF A NATION by Margaret C.C. Christman. Colorful Paintings, Drawings, Cartoons, Maps, Broad sides, Photographs, and Artifacts fill the pages and tell the story of the United States during this pivotal year.

Among the many items illustrated is PATTY REED'S DOLL, borrowed for the Smithsonian's exhibit from the collections of Sutter's Fort State Historic Park.

## **ATTENTION WORDSMITHS AND PRINTERS.**

Oh, you modern creators of the written word, who have yearned for typography of the 1850s, your dreams have materialized. The ADOBE TYPE LIBRARY now offers several appropriate software packages for your personal (Macintosh) computers, featuring distinct kinds of every description for

**PLAIN AND FANCY  
TYPES, BORDERS & ORNAMENTS.**

for every conceivable variety of work, from the smallest card or label to the largest bill or poster. ADOBE WOOD TYPE I, ADOBE WOOD TYPE 2, and ADOBE WOOD TYPE 3 may suit your 150th needs admirably.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE ➡

# NOTICE!!

Those CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS planning to develop Sesquicentennial-Oriented Publications or Videos, or to host Special Events, Exhibits, Living History Programs, Lectures, Symposia, & Etc., Etc., are invited to formally share their plans with the Department's PARKS-150 COMMITTEE, c/o Ron Brean, Gold Rush District.

This Committee will help to Coordinate and Promote your Activities statewide. Further, PARKS-150 will attend to their Formal Recognition by the CALIFORNIA GOLD DISCOVERY TO STATEHOOD SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMISSION.

Only endorsed activities will be authorized to use the OFFICIAL LOGO. Also, they will benefit from increased exposure in the media. The commission staff is maintaining a MASTER CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES and will offer additional Publicity and Promotional Support through Sesquicentennial Press Releases, Mailings, and Publications.

## IMPORTANT TO ALL!

A new BROCHURE, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Turning Points in California History between 1846 and 1850, has been produced through the generous support of the CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS FOUNDATION.

It features an abbreviated Chronology and a Map illustrating State Park sites, where many of the history-making events occurred. Matt Sugarman, Laurena Cabanero, Philip Carey, Mary Helmich, and Linda McDonald were instrumental in its development.

To obtain copies of the State Parks Sesquicentennial Brochure for distribution, send a FAX Order ((916) 654-6925) to the Publications Section today!

Recently, Successful Programs have been held throughout California State Parks and adjacent communities to COMMEMORATE EVENTS OF 150 YEARS AGO. Briefly: The Bear Flag was raised again at SONOMA; At OLOMPALI, differing perspectives of the conflict were aired in a Chatauqua; John BIDWELL reminisced about his 1846 Experiences at his home in Chico; The first Step to Statehood was remembered at MONTEREY with Capt. William Mervine and a contingent of Marines and Sailors landing to take possession of California for the United States; Relatives of the Donner Party held a Reunion at DONNER MEMORIAL; and the Gold Rush Tent Town of COLUMBIA sprang to life once again. → MORE TO FOLLOW!

## ALSO:

A CANNONEER MANUAL for a TWELVE POUND MOUNTAIN HOWITZER has been produced by State Park Ranger Daniel Winkelman for Angel Island State Park's Reenactment Programs. The 16-page BOOKLET includes nomenclature, equipment and safety checklists, procedures, and a history of the weapon developed in the early 1800s and used during the Mexican War and the Civil War.

**CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS:  
THE HEART AND SOUL OF  
CALIFORNIA'S SESQUICENTENNIAL.**



# California's Tapestry

A Section of *The Catalyst*

Office of Community Involvement

Issue #4 - Summer '96

## Book Review:

### Lies My Teacher Told Me

*Everything Your American History  
Textbook Got Wrong*

By James W. Loewen

The New Press,

ISBN 1-56584-100-X

"Bo-o-o-oring", is the adjective most often applied to history by high school students. Students find history boring for good reason, Loewen points out, who has carefully examined 12 American-history textbooks used in high schools. He indicts the publishers for racism, ethnocentrism, heroification, errors of fact and downright dullness.

"There are review pages at the end of each chapter," Loewen writes. One "enumerates 444 'Main Ideas.' No wonder so many graduates cannot remember in which century the Civil War was fought. None of the facts are remembered because they are presented simply as one damned thing after another. Some factoids are wrong or unverifiable. In sum, American-history textbooks are marred by startling errors of omission and distortion."

Here are some of titles of the chapters in the book: Handicapped by History: The Process of Hero-making; The Truth about the First Thanksgiving; "Gone with the Wind": The Invisibility of Racism in American History Textbooks; The Land of Opportunity; Watching Big Brother: What Textbooks Teach about the Federal Government; Why is History Taught Like This?; What Is the Result of Teaching History Like This?

In the chapter devoted to what Loewen calls heroification, the tendency to turn flesh-and-blood individuals into pious, perfect creatures without conflict, pain, credibility or human interest, he makes this point. "By protecting us from a racist Lincoln, textbooks diminish a student's capacity to recognize racism as a force in life, for if Lincoln could be racist, so might the rest of us, and if Lincoln could transcend racism, so might the rest of us."

Loewen explains why textbooks are so bad. From authors who are too lazy to conduct research, to special interest groups from both sides of the society to people who simply think learning dates and names produces an educated student, the problems are

deeply rooted and complex. The effect is really damaging: it promotes racism; it gives students little bases to understand social problems; and it provides no skills for future citizens to solve problems.

This is a serious critique of American education.

### What is the lesson here for California State Parks?

There are many ideas and suggestions the book gave me which could be applied to what we do in Parks. Here is a quick list:

- Don't just copy what the last person said; it may be wrong. We have the primary source materials; use them when you can.
- Be sure to ask the "So What?" question to whatever you are interpreting or teaching.
- If it's not relevant to the customer, it's not important.
- Don't just teach FACTOIDS, teach thinking skills and problem solving.
- Teachers, oh OK, interpreters too, can play a key role, not just in correcting the lies of the past, but in helping society solve today's problems.
- There is a parallel here with natural history education. Loewen would say it is less important that a student learns how to identify all 25 birds than it is for her/him to understand the inter-relationships of five of the birds and then to apply that to a situation at home.

Submit articles and comments to: Jack K. Shu, Park Superintendent,  
OCI- Southern California, c/o Southern Service Center, 8885 Rio San  
Diego Drive, San Diego 92108, Ph# (619)220-5330



# Catalyst Summer 1996 Contents

Field Notes	Page 1
Interpreter's Resources & Events	Page 4
Dear Master Interpreter	Page 5
Regional Workshop on Critical Resource Issues	Page 6
Regional Workshop on Interpretive Communication	Page 8
Volunteers & Cooperating Associations	Page 9
Bald Eagle Program at Silverwood Lake	Page 10
Sempervirens Room at Big Basin	Page 11
What is Digital Video Disc?	Page 11
A Junior Ranger Program	Page 12
Build your own Paper Film Machine	Page 14
Education, Interpretation or Propaganda	Page 15
Where are the Writers?	Page 16
NPS on the World Wide Web	Page 17
Reflections on the Storms of 1995	Page 18
Parks 150 Exchange	Page 19
California's Tapestry	Page 21



## CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Park Services - Interpretation

Room 1442

P.O. Box 942896

Sacramento, CA 95814